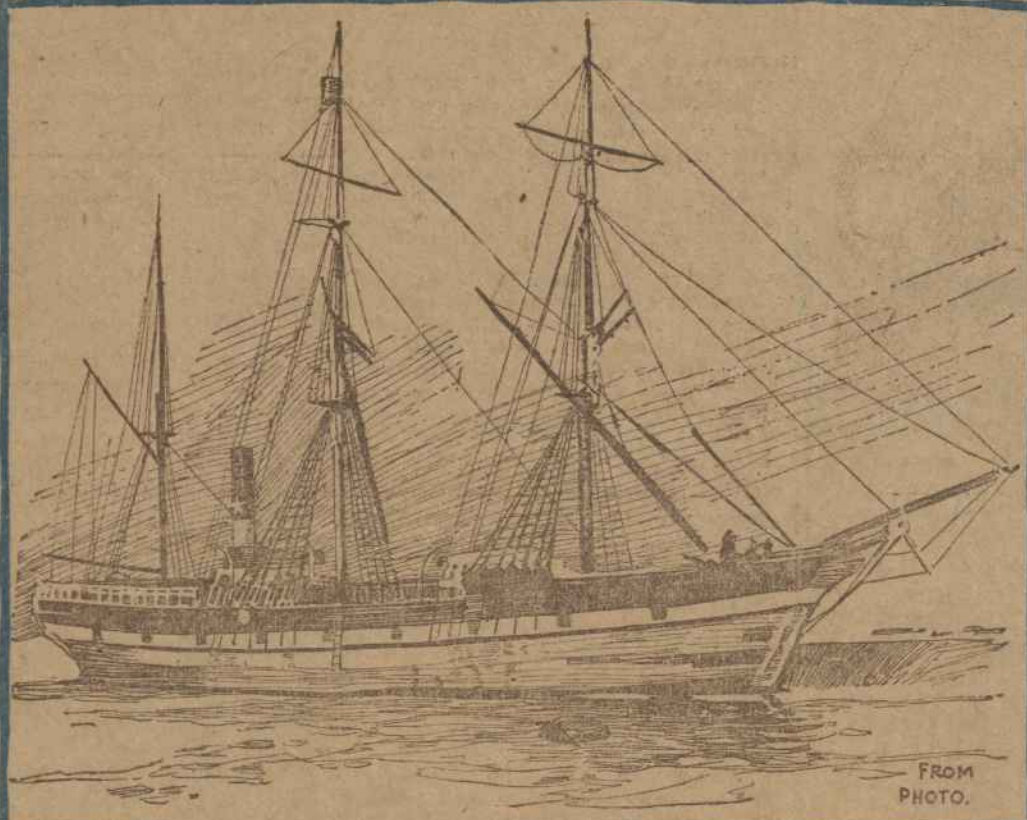


RACING THE MYSTERY OF THE SOUTH POLE TO SOLVE

TWO GREAT EXPEDITIONS OFF TO FIND A NEW WORLD AND EXPLORE THE ANTARCTIC CONTINENT



BORCHGREVINK'S SHIP THE "SOUTHERN CROSS."

THERE is a lively race now in progress to discover the South Pole. It is between a British and a Belgian expedition. The English party, under C. E. Borchgrevink, has just started from London, while the Belgian company went a year ago.

Both are nominally scientific expeditions, but Europeans who are good guessers of state secrets declare that the real object is to discover and take possession of a great polar continent, the Greenland of the south, in the name of the rival powers.

This new continent, of which Mr. Borchgrevink told New Yorkers on his lecture tour of two years ago, is a wonderland, where strange birds, beasts and fishes abound, and rare plants like the Antarctic orchid cover the glacial fields.

Many geographers think this land extends clear to the South Pole in one unbroken plateau. If this be so the discovery of the Pole is likely to be comparatively easy, and may be located long before the elusive North Pole.

SINCE Nansen just missed it and Andree has become a myth, North Pole stock is at a discount. But the South Pole is now booming. Two expeditions have lately sailed for that region. The last, Borchgrevink's, started from London only a fortnight ago.

It is the best equipped expedition that ever headed for Antarctic seas, \$500,000 having been expended upon it by generous and enthusiastic Britishers.

Though it is given out as a purely scientific affair, there are plenty of Londoners who chuckle over this, and some envious foreigner denounce it as the biggest land-grabbing scheme ever hatched by Englishmen.

These sceptics say the object is nothing more than to discover and take possession of a whole new continent in the name of Queen Victoria.

It is no secret that in the hold of the Southern Cross, the trim, piratical-looking steam bark which carried this party of so-called scientists, there were stowed away 500 Union Jacks, which could be intended for no other purpose than for planting on just so many islands or headlands of a new region.

At the big mainmast of this same mysterious craft as she sped out to sea from the Thames, past Gravesend, was the big ensign presented to the head of the expedition, C. E. Borchgrevink, by the Duke of York. This was generally understood to have been given for the purpose of being placed right on the South Pole, or as near it as possible, and claiming thereby that whole region for Her Majesty.

The chief financial backer of this expedition, Sir George Newnes, when pushed into a corner, admitted:

"We may have a few things up our sleeve, and there may be a commercial side to it."

The real reason for this fleet and splendidly fitted out craft is said by the wise ones to be a race for the South Pole to head off the Belgian expedition of last year, pictures and a full account of which appeared in the Journal at that time. The prize at stake is to capture a new continent, which there is a good reason to believe exists there, and place it under British Dominion. Then all its resources, minerals, fisheries, guano deposits would be under perpetual tribute to the British crown.

The Belgian expedition which the present English enterprise hopes to outstrip, went out in the summer a year ago, in the Belgica, under the leadership of Lieutenant Adrien de Gerlache, for the avowed purpose of exploring the unknown lands of the Antarctic seas. Nothing has been heard of it since.

Mr. C. E. Borchgrevink, who is at the head of this last expedition, is a dashing young Norwegian, thirty-four years of age. He has already been on the Antarctic continent, so he knows where he is going. That was in 1894 and 1895, when, as an adventurous whaler, he made a landing on Victoria Land. He claims that he is the first white man to have set foot on that terra incognita.

From Mr. Borchgrevink's description of the great Antarctic continent, it is a place much more inviting to the explorer than anything to be found in the Arctic. It is separated by an enormous distance from any other land.

Perhaps this is the reason that strange birds and fish, extraordinary whales that jump out of the water, and plants never seen before, abound on its shores.

On top of cliffs that rise 2,000 feet straight up from the sea, he saw an active volcano pouring a perfect Niagara of molten lava down into the ocean.

Geological, not seals, that come up out of the water and go to sleep on the rocks, are found there. Strange birds walk about on the shore, and instead of being afraid of men attack them. There are plants that grow on snow and ice, feeding apparently on the air and producing flowers of gorgeous hues, being a kind of glacial orchid, hitherto unknown. These are only a few of the strange things of the Antarctic world, according to Mr. Borchgrevink.

The Southern Cross, which is to convey the present expedition to explore this wonderland, with her yachtlike hull, trim deck houses and masts rising, looks fit for any adventurous undertaking.

Her previous history has been as a whaler, and some say as a pirate vessel. But for months past she has been in the hands of Captain Archer, at Larvik, Norway, who built Nansen's famous Arctic ship, the Fram. He has made the Southern Cross as much like the Fram as possible. Her bow has been rebuilt and made of solid oak eleven feet through. Her sides are also of

tough oak three feet thick at the weakest part, and over all is an ice-hide of American greenheart.

Every other appliance that made Nansen's vessel such a splendid polar craft has been added to the Southern Cross. She has a steaming capacity of twelve or thirteen knots, but is expected to save her coal when she gets into Antarctic waters and depend largely on her sails. She is 140 feet long, with a thirty-foot beam, and is seventeen feet in depth.

As the Southern Cross lay at St. Katherine's Docks in London, just before her departure, she was as much of a curiosity as Peary's ship Hope, with the meteorite and Eskimos, on its return from the Arctic a year ago.

The Southern Cross's decks were alive and bowling with a hundred Siberian and Eskimo dogs. Around the deckhouse were piles of kayaks, or Eskimo canoes. Below decks in every foot of space was stored the oddest kind of clothing and provisions.

There were big reindeer boots and skis to skate on, mighty seal gloves and fur garments of every description. Besides the staple food stuffs were up-to-date tabloids, a dozen of which are said to equal a meal of beefsteak. There was solid tea and coffee in cakes, which only needed to be dissolved for instant use.

Utensils like the Klamath cooker were stored in the galley. Charts and scientific instruments of the most complicated kind crowded the cabin table.

There is a vaudeville side to the expedition, too. For stowed away below decks and among a mass of Polar provisions, was a cinematograph! So we may expect to see this whole South Pole adventure reproduced in moving pictures next season.

But these things are only secondary to the distinguished company of men who form the personnel of the expedition. First of all is the leader, C. E. Borchgrevink, the Columbus of Antarctica.

In 1896 he came to America on a lecture tour and told us all about his first Antarctic trip. He tried to fit out a larger expedition that same year to continue scientific researches in that region, but failed.

But since the Belgian expedition sailed he has been marvelously successful. In fact, he has had all the money he could devise means for spending on a Polar outfit, and the result is the present superbly fitted out expedition.

His present scientific staff consists of Lieutenant W. Colbeck, of the Royal Naval Reserve, the magnetic observer, assisted by Louis Bernacchi, and Hugh Evans and Mr. M. Hansen, zoologists and geologists.

Captain Jensen is navigator, Dr. Klovstad medical officer, and Albert Faugner, chief officer. The crew consists of thirty men, mostly hardy Norwegians.

Captain Jensen, of long experience in Arctic navigation, has a fine outfit of his own used in Polar land work. With his Eskimo dog, alpenstock, and skis, which he equipped himself with on the deck of the Southern Cross, as she lay at her London dock, to satisfy the curiosity of visitors, the captain seemed as fully equipped to navigate glaciers as the seas.

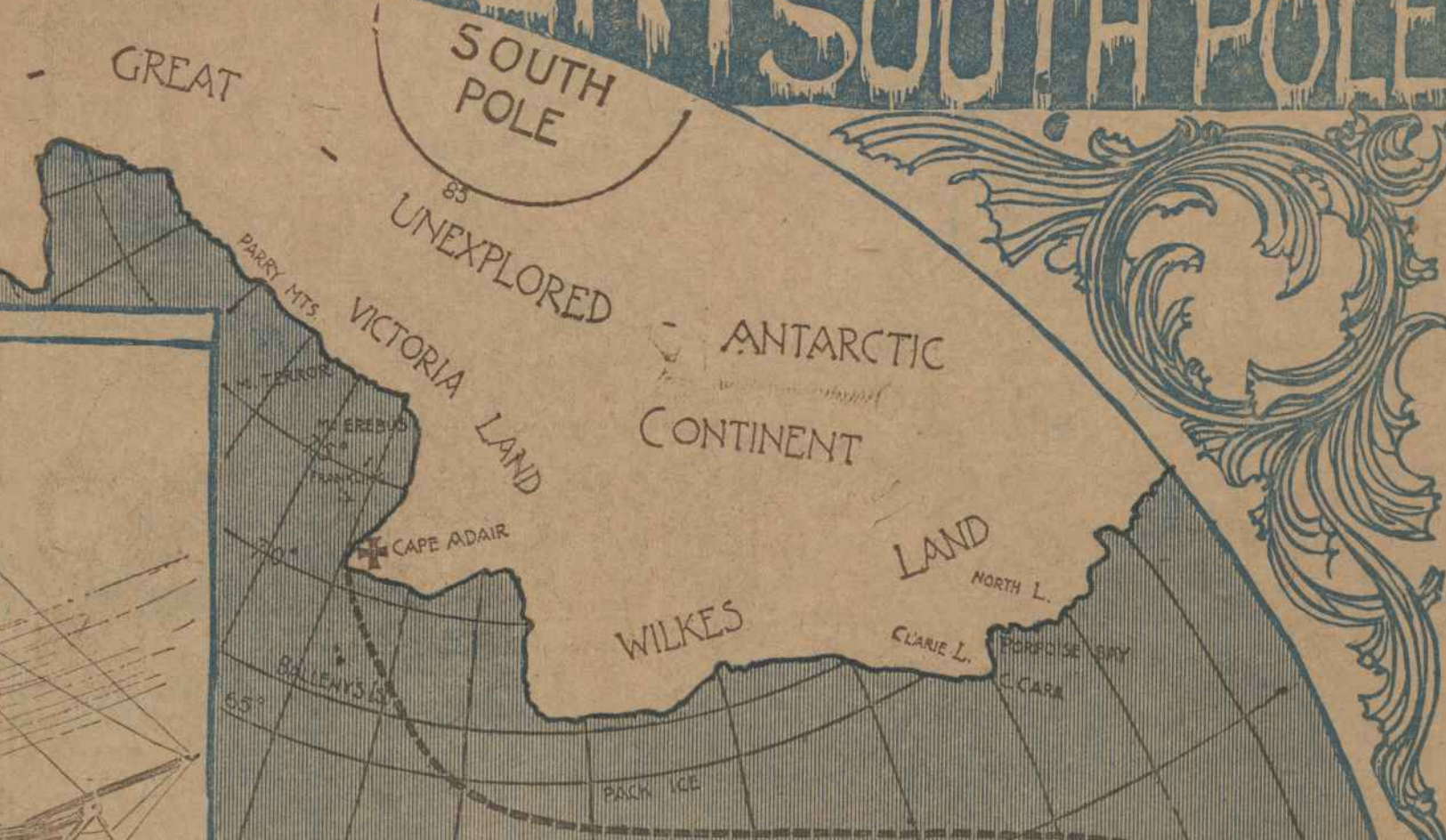
Here is Mr. Borchgrevink's own statement of the plans of the trip made just before embarking:

"I shall proceed direct to Hobart Town, Australia, thence to Cape Adair. I propose to land at Cape Adair, in 70 degrees south latitude, with an adequate outfit of instruments, provisions, dogs, and sledges, and to establish my Winter quarters at that spot. Seal-globular huts, constructed on the Eskimo principle, and built out of hardwood, will be taken with us for the purpose of sheltering my staff, and also some live stock which I intend to take with me.

"As soon as the provisions and implements of the main camp have been landed the vessel will proceed southward with its crew, myself and three of my staff, if possible, as far as 75 degrees south, where my companions and I will be landed (all must necessarily be speshoe runners, with our instruments, dogs, sledges, provisions and other necessities for the inland journey toward the South Magnetic Pole).

"If I succeed in landing on Victoria Land at that latitude I shall have to cross about ten degrees of longitude in a westerly direction to reach the place where the South Magnetic Pole (according to dip compass observations) ought to be situated. In latitude 75 degrees, 35 minutes south, longitude 130 degrees east, or about 150 English miles, the longitudes at 75 degrees south being about fifteen miles apart.

"I hope to have covered the distance inland and back in two months, in which time I shall have made the necessary mag-



C. E. BORCHGREVINK LEADER OF THE EXPEDITION

FROM PHOTO



ESKIMO DOGS FOR SLEDGE WORK



CAPT JENSEN IN ARCTIC COSTUME

FROM PHOTO



BORCHGREVINK'S CABIN ON THE SOUTHERN CROSS

FROM PHOTO

because it could do some valuable work among the islands between Australia and Victoria Land during the latter part of the Antipodean Winter.

"In the Antarctic Spring, about September, 1899, the Southern Cross will return with a fresh lot of mountain climbers. These will then join the first party landed, and the combined forces will make a bold dash for the geographical Pole. If we find the interior a comparatively level plateau, as is expected, we shall stand a good chance of reaching the Pole. We expect to return to England in 1900."

It was during his Antarctic voyages from 1899 to 1898 that Sir James Ross first sighted the vast ice fields which he called Victoria Land. He made the best of his way round a small bit of the coast, saw and named Mount Erebus, a volcano 12,000 feet in height, Mount Terror, and many other points. But his passage to the interior was barred by a lofty ice wall, which seemed to prohibit all attacks upon it.

In 1840 Captain Wilkes was sent to the Antarctic by the United States Government to make explorations, and he covered much of the same ground as did Sir James Ross. But the work was never followed up, and the task of clearing up the mysteries of the southern polar seas has been continued little by little by chance sailors in that inhospitable region. Only a small portion of the Antarctic continent, known as Victoria Land, has ever been outlined, and that mostly from the decks of whalers, which have sighted it accidentally.

At Cape Adair, and again join camp at Cape Adair before the Antarctic Winter sets in. "My scientific staff at Cape Adair will meanwhile have been occupied in exploring the bar at Victoria Land, in taking deep water soundings, investigating the flora and in collecting specimens of the fauna and flora, besides making pendulum observations, taking meteorological data, etc. "The whaler will return to Australia or Tasmania, both because it would be safer for the vessel and